The
Progressive Review
Nbr 274 November 1988

Where was George on October 20, 1980?

The making of a mediarch

Why nuclear power won't stop global warming

Were the votes counted right?

Kerry Waghorn

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Weather Report

Whistle stop

Over the past two years the Senate or the House have unanimously approved a whistleblowers protection act four times. Finally acting in concert, Congress got a bill out just before adjournment only to have it pocket-vetoed by President Reagan. The measure would have provided new protection to federal workers who expose waste and fraud in the government. In the past these workers have been subjected to recriminations even from the supposed whistleblower protection agency, the Office of Special Counsel. According to the Government Accountability Project, the OSC has "acted as a Trojan Horse for whistleblowers and as the administration's most effective weapon against freedom of speech -- identifying wounded dissenters who seek help and then teaming up with agencies to finish them off."

Under current law whistleblowers are highly vulnerable. GAP reports that the whistleblower defense has succeeded only four times out of some 2000 appeals and there have been no successful appeals since 1984.

The issue is expected to come up early in the next session of Congress.

Soviets get interested in ecology

In a major change from past indifference, high officials of the Soviet Union are calling protection of the environment second in importance only to preventing nuclear war. Foreign minister Valdimir Petrovsky, at a news conference that dealt solely with ecology, said that life on earth "transcended ideological differences." In recent developments the Soviets:

- signed an international treaty on ozone protection
- called with an environmental summit meeting.
- suggested that funds saved from disarmament be used on the environment.
- promised to follow international environmental laws including compensation to victims of accidents.
- said saving the Amazon rain forests, ending toxic dumping in Africa and protecting endangered species were high on its priority list.

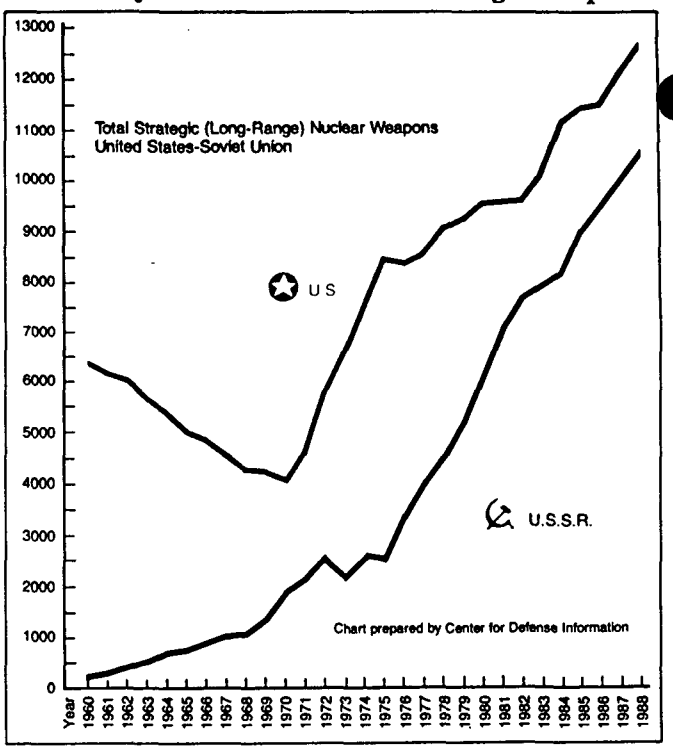
The Progressive Review

The Progressive Review is published approximately 9 times a year. One year subscription: $10. Two year subscription: $18. Single issue $1. The Review uses the news services of College Press Service, Pacific News Service and Hersay News Service. Editor: Sam Smith. ISSN 0889- 2202.

1739 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington DC 20009
202--232-5544

Compuser ID# 72057,1525
Peacenet Conference: pn.dc
Peacenet handle: ssmith

U.S. Always Ahead of Soviets in Strategic Weapons



Parental leave good business?

According to a survey by 9to5, the national association of working women, small business employment in states with parental leave policies is growing 21% faster than in states without such policies. Says Karen Nussbaum, executive director of 9to5, "We found empirically that parental leave does not hurt small business."

Water problems

A US Department of Agriculture publication, *Agricultural Outlook,* estimates that about 46 percent of American counties have the potential for ground water contamination from farm pesticides and fertilizers. More than 50 million people rely on ground water for drinking in these 1400 counties. Meanwhile, a California preliminary study has found that women who drank no cold tap water during their pregnancies reported miscarriage rates ranging from zero to 7.7 percent, compared to women who did drink tap water and reported miscarriage rates ranging from 8.4 to 13.1 percent. Scientists suspect bacteria that grow in the lining of water pipes. A follow-up study is being done.

Super-spy in the sky

According to *Cleveland Plain Dealer and the New Statesman,* American and British intelligence are constructing an electronic spy system that can monitor almost all overseas and even some domestic phone calls anywhere in the world. Computers will allow the system to scan billions of phone messages for key words or key telephone numbers, saving the material for later retrieval. A slim glimmer of light fell on the project earlier this year when a witness, Margaret Newsham, told congressional investigators that she overheard a phone tap of Senator Strom Thurmond. The British base, at which the project is housed (in part in order to avoid US restrictions on wiretapping) has a staff of more than 1200, some two thirds of them Americans. The *New Statesman* reported in its August 12 issue that special British intelligence teams have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been flown into Silicon Valley over the past few years for secret training on special computer systems that carry out both domestic and international interception.

In the wake of the Watergate scandal, the National Security Agency lost its authority to monitor telephone calls but the agency remained free to monitor satellites outside the US.

And now the rest of the story....

Margaret Newsham, mentioned in the story above, has also sued Lockheed, her former employer, charging fraudulent billing and work practices on super-secret defense programs. Newsham, who worked as a computer software specialist on secret satellite projects, filed her suit under the 1986 Official Claims Act, which allows government whistleblowers to collect a bounty on successful charges of fraud. This act has helped turn up new cases of government contractor fraud at the rate of about one a week.

Newsham's suit revolves around Lockheed's participation in black budget projects (*PR 263),* projects that even most of Congress doesn't know about when it votes the funds. The black budget is currently running at about $35 billion, more than the federal budget for education.

Security clearance for a black budget project can take up to two years and in the interim, workers can be on a contractor's payroll without anything to do. In Newsham's suit it is charged that these workers were kept in separate facilities called "ice boxes," during which time, she alleges, some workers sold real estate, stocks, jewelry and cosmetics. One employee, the suit charges, typed out the entire Bible on a computer.

The Catholic Conference & the Secret Service

While librarians around the country have stood up against FBI attempts to use them as informers, the US Catholic Conference played footsy with the Secret Service prior to Pope Paul's visit to the US last fall by providing the SS files on the pro-choice group, Catholics for a Free Choice. Says Frances Kissling, director of the group, "When it comes to abortion-related activities, the USCC seems to be prepared to engage in the kind of unprincipled and even immoral behavior it would condemn if related to Central America or peace issues. To be sending them material on an organization they knew represents no threat could be seen as a form of harassment and could be creating an incorrect impression that we present some dangers." Ironically, Kissling had unsuccessfully tried herself to meet with the Secret Service prior to the Pope's tour to urge their assistance in protecting women's clinics following threats by anti-abortion groups to shut down abortion providers in cities the Pope was scheduled to visit.

Furthermore. . .

Eugene McCarthy's new selection of essays is out. It's called *Required Reading* and includes one published in the *Review* a few years back.

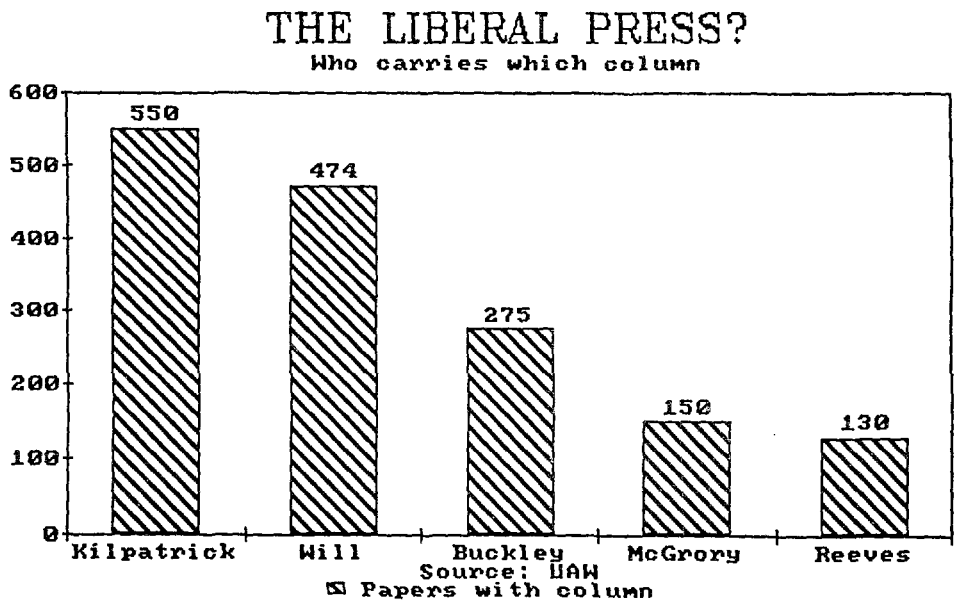
The Children's Defense Fund celebrates its fifteenth birthday this month.

According to *Personnel Journal,* the average white collar employee spends up to 70% of the working day on paperwork. The paperwork is rewritten 4.2 times on the average as at cost of $106.

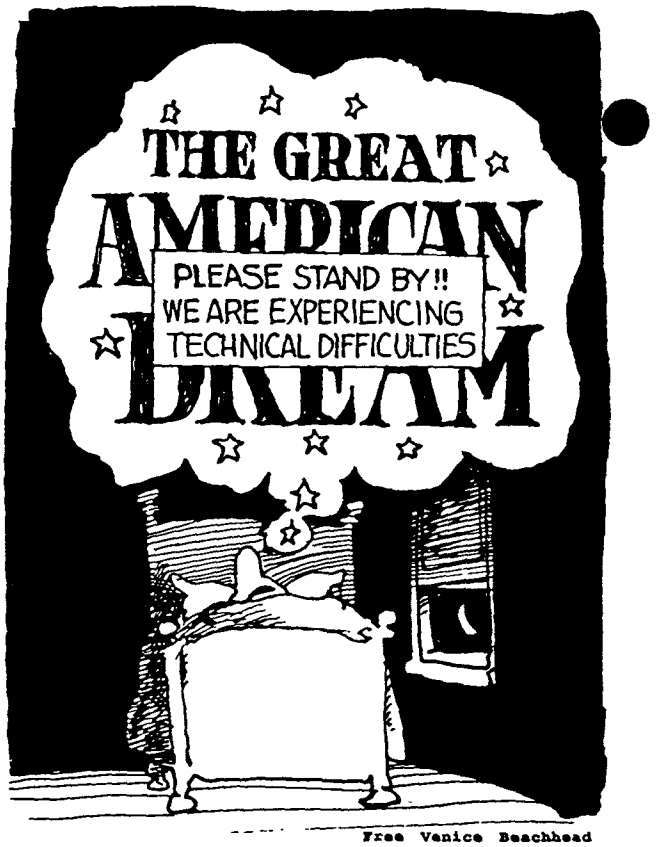
California researchers exposed 20 condoms for 72 hours of ozone levels equal to smog-alert conditions in LA. Only two of the condoms remained intact. The rest were perforated, lost their tips or became covered with craters.

The National Organization for Women has launched a new campaign for passage of the equal rights amendment.

The *Miami Herald* estimates that the state of Florida has spent at least $57 million on the death penalty since 1973. With 18 executions, that comes $3.18 million per death. This compares to an estimate about $516,000 for life imprisonment. Meanwhile Florida ranks 47th among the state in spending for education, 48th in law enforcement salaries and 48th in percentage of high school students who graduate.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The making of a mediarch

Sam Smith

This year's presidential campaign, otherwise without socially redeeming virtue, has at least effectively destroyed the myth of Ronald Reagan as mediameister. George Bush has proved that anybody can do it.

This had been long concealed because of a natural confusion between cause and effect. Reagan appeared to be manipulating the media when, in fact, he was simply reaping the benefits of being its most diligent and well-behaved student-politician. What appeared to be a stygian skill called from deep within him was nothing more than a long and total commitment to the media's own rules and mores.

That the effect can be replicated virtually at will was amply demonstrated by the Bush campaign. Bush entered the race absent a verifiable microcurie of charisma, with little rhetorical ability, and seemingly lacking even elemental shrewdness. Yet his media triumph has put even that of the Great Prevaricator to shame. What took Reagan years of GE commercials to achieve, Bush has mastered in a few short weeks.

The dramatic alteration of the presumed persona of George Bush should come as no surprise to students of the tube. After all, television long ago learned that talent was the least of its requirements. It discovered it didn't need a comedian as good as Ernie Kovacs, a journalist as good as Edward R. Murrow or some actress imported from Broadway to fill a dramatic role. It could simply manufacture a reasonable likeness out of the endless pool of attractive, inoffensive faces and bodies trooping through its casting offices.

One of the earliest and longest smash hits of television was *Howdy Doody*, a seminal production that recognized television's potential as the electronic successor to the Punch & Judy show -- in which life is portrayed by farcical characters engaged in fantastic situations evoking the most generic mythical symbolism.

In drama this potential has brought us to *Miami Vice*, in music to MTV. Our news anchors are Punch & Judy journalists, Ted Koppel symbolizes Thought, Vanna White is Beautiful Woman, Tom Braden does his political transvestite act as The Leftist. Even Saturday Night Live now seems a recreation of the original as performed by puppets. George Bush stars in this season's mini-series: *The Presidency, Part XXXXI.* And J. Danforth Quayle plays Robert Redford playing a Quayle-like candidate.

To be sure the real survives in strange corners of the box, as I have discovered with pleasure grazing through the back forty channels of my newly acquired cable system. But the dominant character one sees on television today is an actor or actress playing a role -- even when that which is presented is supposed to be real.

The ability of television to corrupt whatever its ubiquitous eye finds can be frequently observed during sports coverage. Coaches and players have learned what television expects of them and even the most inarticulate attempt to adapt themselves whenever the microphone pops up. Similarly, many victims of tragedies have learned unconsciously to speak of their sorrow in modulated and analytical terms when confronted with the cameras of Eyewitness News. We all speak television now. American life has become a docudrama and we keep forgetting which part we just invented.

Reality as nostalgia

In such an environment it is small wonder that we choose our presidents for their symbolic virtue more than for their policies, that political debates are really little more than national screen tests, and that facts have become just the icing on the cake of myth.

We are not electing a president any more. We are

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

selecting a mediarch, one who rules through the media. The person we chose is the one who best performs the symbolic role of president as we would like to see it on TV. Presidential elections have become a process by which the American voting public decides which advertising agency it likes best.

The newly trained George Bush looked and acted the part best. Right height, right accent, right smile, right ethnicity. . .

Backed by virulently mendacious advertising aimed at making his opponent look unpresidential, Bush seized the media initiative.

There's an irony here, because at the start Dukakis had the media edge. He is actually a superb performer, as he belatedly demonstrated during a town meeting with Illinois high school students. Holding a hand mike and wandering around the stage like a low-key Phil Donahue, Dukakis was forceful, convincing and, yes, even likeable. The problem is that we don't think of our presidents as low-keyed Phil Donahues. George Bush is more like it. You're great, Mike, but not quite what we're looking for, you know? Besides there's the Greek thing and -- er, um, the mixed marriage, you know what I mean?

Many who were raised on rationalistic values, educated to respect truth, fact and knowledge, have felt a bit stunned by the insignificance of the real in the 1988 presidential campaign. But if, as mounting evidence suggests, we have moved into a post-rational age driven by symbols and myths, the real may be as unrecallable a piece of nostalgia as the "free enterprise system" is to Ronald Reagan.

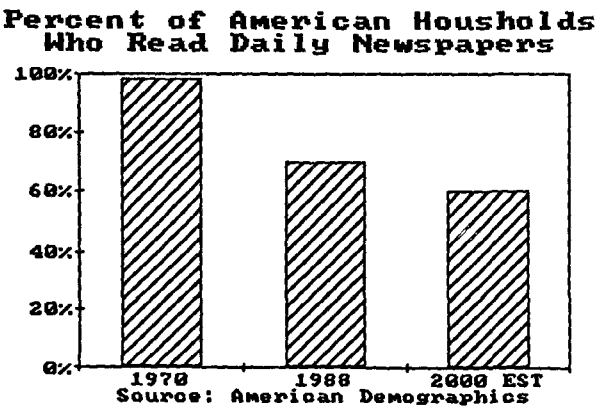
One can not, for example, explain the massive change in the poll results from summer to fall based on anything that actually *happened.* Nothing actually *happened.* Except on television.

One of the shamans of contemporary politics, Democratic pollster Peter Hart, was asked about this. Does this mean issues aren't important anymore? His reply: "Issues are important because they define character."

A screenwriter's answer. Issues are just another tool of the trade.

The Next Hurrah

The era of old machine politics is over, but television, and such related crafts as political polling and consulting, have become our new political machines, machines strikingly different from the previous ones because, fundamentally, they are not really that interested in politics. The political consultant, the pollster and the television producer, are not out to change the course of American politics or history, but to turn a buck. Consultants take on political clients with the eclecticism of lawyers; pollsters are, they will assure you, independent professionals; and television pretends it is merely an onlooker, reminiscent of one of its earlier creations, the bumbling Cauliflower McPug, whose favorite sound-bite was, "I wasn't doin' nuttin'. I was just standing there."



Spumante vs. Reagan

One hundred and eighty ten-year-old kids were surveyed on a variety of subjects. One of the questions asked them to name as many US presidents as they could; another asked them to name as many alcoholic beverages as they could.

On the average, they were able to name 4.8 presidents and 5.2 alcohol products. And there were those who could correctly spell Asti Spumante who could not spell Ronald Reagan -- Sports Inc. magazine.

But there is no way that television can just stand there. It has increasingly dominated national politics, from determining which candidates are visually acceptable to sopping up so much campaign money that there isn't even enough left for political buttons. Pollsters and the political consultants are similarly intrusive. Many of the latter get paid like advertising agencies, based on the size of their media buys, which means a vested interest in steering politics towards high-cost television ads.

One of the most vivid images of the last campaign came from a PBS program on European coverage of the race. The scene was set in what might be best described as the convention control booth. In the background were monitors showing delegates waving red and blue Dukakis signs. A man -- would he call himself a convention *producer*? -- paced up and down yelling, "I want the red signs down and the blue signs up! Red down, Blue up! Get that? Red down, blue up!" His minions reached for their phones and a close-up revealed a woman screaming into the mouthpiece, "No, get those red signs down!"

A few seconds later the monitors showed not a single red sign. Those in the control booth broke into self-congratulatory applause.

I sat there wondering: for this, we got rid of the Richard Daleys of the world? Could it really be that there were no Democratic delegates who would wave their red signs in defiance of capricious orders from some unseen, unelected expert in the control booth? Apparently not in the politics of 1988.

Now back to the newsroom

Television news, most notably CBS, made some effort to counteract the damage its own medium has done. But these attempts, such as pointing out the lies of the Bush television ads, were sapped of their strength by the media's inexorable fear of appearing unbalanced. Thus the Bush falsehoods were treated as basically no more serious than the largely technical flaws found in Dukakis's claims. Television news' on-the-one-hand-this-on-the-other-hand-that approach to such matters actually furthers the falsehood and may help to explain why so many voters fail to understand the real differences between their politicians.

In addition, television news has been irrevocably changed by television advertising. One of the most instructive articles of the campaign, by Lloyd Grove, appeared in the October 20 issue of the *Washington Post.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Grove's point was that TV news and ad images were becoming intertwined to such an extent that, as pollster Marvin Bainman, put it, "People are confused as to what is advertising and what is not advertising. To the extent that the ads look like news items or the reverse, that just contributes to the confusion."

Grove quotes Brian Healy, senior political news producer at CBS as saying:

"In the 1970s, when we looked at commercials and advertising techniques, and the pacing of popular TV programs, we saw that the American mind was capable of handling a lot of different camera angles, quick shots and short bites, because Americans had seen commercials all their lives. So we have borrowed from the advertising techniques of commercial film making to put our spots together."

Democratic media consultant Robert Squier says that if you did a history of the sound bite, you'd find that ten years ago, a candidate could get 45 seconds on the air. A 1984 study by George Washington University found that the sound bite was down to 14.79 seconds and this year's preliminary work at the University of Texas found the average sound bit running about nine seconds.

At this rate, by 1992 all television will tell us about the candidates is their last names. And they'll bill it as a debate.

Timid new world

One of television's least noted destructive side-effects is how it bullies us into timidity. It has taught us that the reality of the world is too complicated for us to understand, that being perceived as being right is more important than being right, that if we are not threatened by war, famine or flood, we are definitely threatened by whatever exotic disease is used as a crutch for the latest docudrama. The only really safe place is in front of one's television set.

This lesson has been well learned by the nation's politicians who, unfortunately, are not in front of the set but inside it. We sit down for a safely contained vicarious experience and find our candidates acting like couch potatoes, i.e. just like us. And the price they pay for projecting security is that they bore us. Late in the campaign, one poll found that nearly two-thirds of the voters wished someone else was running.

But even if a candidate were brave enough to talk about a real issue in some depth, would it work? According to Robert Abelson of Yale University, probably not. Abelson and Robert Kinder has studied the polling samples of the 1980 and 1984 National Election Study and, says Abelson, feelings are three to four times more important than issues or party loyalty in a presidential election.

The samples measured four variables: people's perceptions of the candidates' personal qualities, the feelings aroused by the candidates, party affiliation and positions on current issues. According to a report in *Psychology Today,* Carter was seen as vague and indecisive and Mondale failed to inspire hope and pride. Says Abel son, personality judgements and feelings "are close to our daily experiences; they package a lot of complicated things very neatly. they're a much more natural response than rational reflections on policy choices."

Another study, at the University of Minnesota, found that emotional reactions to Reagan and Mondale were twice as important as party affiliation to a sample of 1500 voters.

Still another study, this one at the University of Pennsylvania by Garold Zullow and Martin Seligman, found that you could judge winners by their campaign speeches. The one with the most optimistic speeches took the White House. As Zullow put it: "People tend to vote for the candidate who makes them feel more hopeful about the country's future." Interestingly, earlier this year, the pair analyzed the speeches thus far by Dukakis and Bush and gave the election to Dukakis. But that was before Bush had taken his Berlitz course in television and begun describing Dukakis, totally unfairly but incessantly, as a prophet of doom and gloom.

Democracy: more than a feeling?

Those who find much of the above alien to everything they thought choosing a president should be about might note that Robert Abelson is not some political philistine. He is an academic, presumably a Phd, trained in the rational, telling us that feelings are a more natural response than rational reflections. While it is unlikely that he would extend to his students much tolerance were they to function on such an assumption, here is yet another indication of the rising importance of the non-rational in American life, even academic American life. I recently visited several colleges. At one, semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, was offered as a major. Semiotics teaches us, among other things, that red and green mean nothing until they are put in relationship, as in a traffic light. Similarly, I suppose, Willie Horton and Michael Dukakis mean nothing until they are put in relationship, as in a TV commercial. At another school, a basic psychology course outdrew every other course on campus by a factor of three to one. Determining, marketing, and analyzing how we feel and how we react to the symbols that engulf us may be one of the last great industries we have to offer the world.

Progressives, propelled by fact, logic and critical thinking, resist the trend. We don't like to talk about the symbolism of our own efforts or engage in practices that imply contempt for our audience. This is honorable but places us at risk of becoming a stolid, ineffective sect clinging to values that no one challenges but no one accepts. Everyone thinks the Amish are good and noble people, but they don't get many converts.

Curiously, it was the left in the 1960s that gave symbolic politics one of its greatest boosts, combining a rational assault on the establishment with great theatre and a cry for the liberation of our symbols and our feelings. But with time, the theatrical left grew up and dried up, replaced by somber advocates of change who seem at times more like Talmudic scholars than rebels. Todav some of the dullest people in Washington are public interest activists who know plenty of statistics but few songs.

In conventional Democratic politics, the trend has been in the same direction. The last four Democratic candidates --McGovern, Carter, Mondale, Dukakis-- have been sincere and decent but not all that interesting. Good utility infielders don't fill the ball park.

In better times, this would be merely unfortunate. But the real danger of rule by media is that the tyranny of symbols doesn't disappear on election day. It continues to obscure real issues, real policies and real practices throughout an administration. America is far less a democracy than it was when Ronald Reagan entered the White House. That's bad enough but far worse is the fact that America doesn't know it.

The first job of progressives after this dismal election is to come to terms with the semiotic society we have become, a world in which signs and symbols mean more than facts and figures, a world in which you lose elections

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

because of a bad choice of ad agencies rather than a poor choice of issues. We proved in the sixties that myth and reality can be integrated in such a way that the symbols support real change. There will inevitably be a conflict between the symbols and the reality, but if the symbols are based on honest dreams rather than the hypocritical images of a Reagan or a Bush, they can help us towards a better reality.

Roosevelt understood this, so did Jack Kennedy, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Millions of young Americans understood this in the sixties. And these myths, these symbols, sustain us still, breaking through the wall of our rationality, giving us something to live and fight for when the facts say we have lost.

It is time not only to dream again but to give mythical substance to our dreams. The alternative is to leave the American spirit hostage to the fraudulent symbols of a crypto-authoritarian right which will steadily but surely rob democracy of its essence leaving us only with endlessly repeated images that assure us that nothing has changed.

How bad was liberalism anyway?

We've come across some comments on the accomplishments of liberalism of the last half century that are worth passing on. They were made by Allen Ferguson, President of AFE Inc, before the National Economist Club last fall. Ferguson notes that the real gross national product rose 546% from 1933 to 1980. Real per capita disposable income rose 233% during the same period. In 1929, one percent of nonfarm workers took vacations. By 1970, the figure had risen to 80%. The average work week dropped from around 48 hours in 1929 to around 35 hours in 1980.

By 1950, 34 million workers were covered by unemployment insurance; by 1980 the figure was almost 93 million. Social security, during the same period expanded from covering 46 million to 128 million people. While the share of income realized by the poorest 20% of the population has not changed much over the years, the percentage held by the wealthiest 5% has dropped from 30% in 1929 to 15.4% in 1981, indicating a redistribution of income to the middle class. Similarly, the percentage of total wealth held by the top one percent was 36% in 1929 and down to 20% by 1969.

Between 1959 and 1979, 9% of whites and 25% of blacks moved out of the poverty classification. And a Congressional Research Service study done in 1982 showed that without the various liberal transfer programs, 24% of the country would have been in poverty rather than the 9% that was the case. Said Ferguson: "It is my view that current attacks on programs of the past decades arise, not because liberal policies failed, but rather because they succeeded too well."

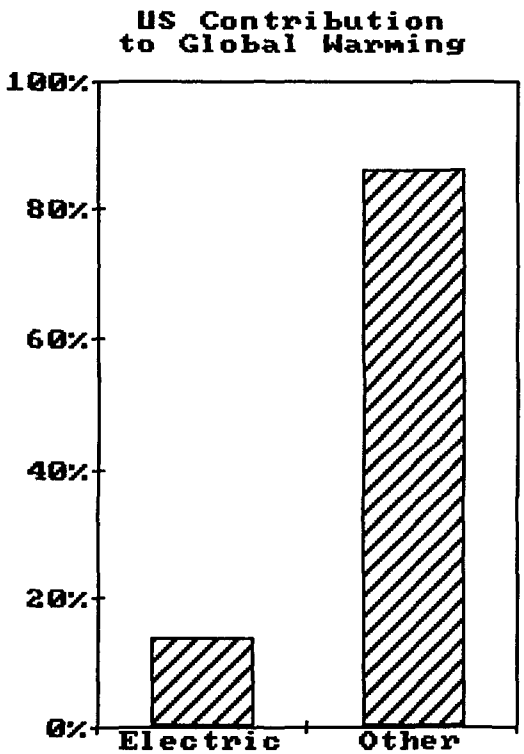
--Progressive Review 1985

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Why nuclear power won't help prevent global warming

Several bills have been offered in Congress that would provide major federal support for a "new generation" of nuclear power plants. The nuclear industry has launched a public relations campaign to support the idea of reviving nuclear power in this country. Public Citizen and the Safe Energy Communication Council recently released a study on the issue. Here are some of the key points:

Nuclear power cannot solve the global warming problem: The chart below shows the relative importance to global warming of electric power generating plants and other factors such as motor vehicle fumes, deforestation, and other emissions. Worldwide, US electric energy plants contribute only 4% to global warming.



Furthermore, to reduce fossil fuel use by one-half, the world's rate of building nuclear plants would have to be increased almost 40-fold. And even if such a construction rate were possible, completion of all these plants by 2020 would be too late to avert the current global warming trend.

Nuclear power is too expensive: To fully switch from fossil fuels to nuclear power would cost up to $2 trillion. Even with massive federal support, it has taken 30 years and approximately $150 billion to build the current generation of nuclear plants, which provide only about six percent of the nation's energy supply. Further, nuclear energy is the most expensive conventional means of producing energy and it costs are rising faster than all other conventional alternatives.

Nuclear power is dangerous: In the past ten years, US nuclear utilities have reported nearly 30,000 mishaps at their plants including the partial meltdown at Three mile Island and several near misses since then. The US Nuclear Regulatory Commission and others have estimated that the chance of a core-melt accident at a US reactor may be as high as 45% over the next 20 years. It is reasonable to assume that the chance of an accident would increase with a larger number of reactors.

Nuclear power is a hazard to the environment: The plants produce long-lived, highly radioactive and toxic waste for which there is still no proven safe method of permanent storage or disposal.

Energy efficiency has worked: Between 1973 and 1985, energy efficiency reduced US energy consumption per unit of gross national product by 28%. Energy efficiency improvements now save the US $160 billion per year. If we continue to find way to improve energy efficiency at this rate, we could reduce consumption another 23% by 2000.

Renewable energy sources can do more: According to the PC-SEC study, renewable energy technologies already account for more than 8% of the nation's total energy supply. They are conservatively -- and with only limited government support -- expected to double their contribution by the year 2000. These resources include biomass, geothermal energy, hydropower, passive heating, wind systems, photovoltaic cells and solar thermal electric plants.

Other systems: Other systems such as cogeneration and combined cycle natural gas turbines and increasing the use of natural gas can add substantially to US energy production.

The advantage that such alternatives offer are less damage to the environment, more efficiency, less cost and less time to plan and construct. The PC-SEC report estimates that energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies and selected natural gas technologies could collectively reduce electrical demand and/or provide 29% of projected energy demand in 2000 above and beyond what they are already providing. This figure assumes that there will be only a modest effort to encourage these energy sources. Significantly greater gains are possible given a more favorable political climate. The amount of energy potential from these sources is only slightly less than that currently being provided by coal and oil for electrical generation as well as in the commercial, industrial and residential sectors. By moving in this direction the use of coal and oil could be reduced by more than three-quarters and total carbon dioxide emissions from coal and oil could be reduced by approximately 68%.

Become a supporting subscriber

Many small circulation alternative publications keep going with the help of supporting subscribers who contribute a sum in addition to their regular subscription to aid the publication in its work. You will note on your renewal form that there is such a category. We will be grateful if you will indicate your support of our efforts by subscribing with a contribution above the normal fee. Or you can renew right now by sending us your mailing label and a contribution. Mail to the Progressive Review, 1739 Connecticut Ave NW, DC 20009.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where was George on October 20, 1980?

Jonathan Marshall

Eight years ago, last month, Reagan-Bush campaign officials were in a panic. News accounts and their own intelligence sources indicated that a deal to free the American hostages held in Iran was imminent. The dreaded "October Surprise," a last-minute maneuver to swing the election to Carter, was at hand.

Two weeks later, Carter's deal had mysteriously fallen through. Ronald Reagan and George Bush had the election sewn up. They went on to win a landslide victory.

Were their luck and Carter's misfortune simply one of history's vicissitudes?

Or, as several witnesses now attest, did George Bush and other campaign officials conspire to rob the hostages of their freedom and Carter of his victory by sabotaging the negotiations?

The evidence is far from conclusive. Bush's spokesmen deny if flatly. But without a congressional investigation, doubts will linger forever.

In September 1980, Jimmy Carter got a break. Citing provocations by Teheran, Iraq invaded Iran, forcing its Islamic rulers on the defensive for the first time.

On September 16, a relative by marriage of the Khomeini family met in Bonn with Carter's chief hostage negotiator, Warren Christopher. The Iranians were in a hurry, the emissary said. They were prepared to release the hostages within days of a settlement that included release of weapons and spare parts already paid for by the shah but held up by order of the White House. Christopher indicated that about $50 million in military goods were ready for quick shipment.

A couple of weeks later an Iranian emissary contacted Robert McFarlane, then an aide to Senator John Tower of Texas and later a mastermind of the 1985-86 arms-for-hostage deals. McFarlane put the man together with two top Reagan campaign aides: Richard Allen, Reagan's foreign policy adviser and first national security adviser, and Laurence Silberman, who wound head the transition team on intelligence before being appointed to the federal bench.

Since their meeting at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington made the news a couple of years ago, the three Americans have said they can't remember just when it took place (late September or early October) or who the Iranian was. Allen says he lost his notes. None of them reported the encounter to authorities.

But they admit a deal was dicussed, even if rejected. The Iranian deal offered to arrange the hostages' release through the Reagan-Bush campaign before the election to ensure Carter's defeat in return for a promise to supply arms to Iran.

Houshang Lavi, an Iranian-born arms dealer and naturalized American, has told this writer he was the emissary in question. He says he also talked with then-CIA Director Stansfield Turner, but the Carter people wouldn't listen.

Lavi adds that Allen and Silberman weren't the only Reagan campaign officials he communicated with. "I was in contact with James Baker," he says, referring to Bush's campaign director who became a "senior adviser" to the Reagan-Bush campaign boss, William Casey. Baker "was clearly frustrated" by the hostage situation in the September-October period, Lavi recalls, "I was reporting to him on what was going on in Iran. I had contacts high in the [Iranian] government in several factions."

Meanwhile, the Reagan-Bush camp had reason to fear that time was running out. One top adviser learned that a "partial release of hostages for parts" was in the works. One of Allen's sources reported on October 15 that a high-level administration official confirmed that Iranian President Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr wanted a deal and that "we are prepared to listen to any type of relationship they may want, ranging from economic aid to the sale of military spares."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Carter official further indicated that "the last week of October is the likely time for the hostages to be released" but that it could happen "at any moment, as a bolt out of the blue."

Allen passed the information on to Casey, Ed Meese and Ronald Reagan.

Within days, the whole picture changed radically. As Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, later noted, "Our hopes for a positive resolution of the hostage issue were dashed in late October."

Bani-Sadr, now in exile in Paris, recalled that "as a deal was about to be made with the Carter administration, suddenly the negotiations stopped. I now believe this happened because of secret contacts between Reagan and Khomeini representatives."

(Certainly the Iranians had a motive to deal with Reagan's camp. Khomeini and his allies, who took over the hostage negotiations from Bani-Sadr, viewed Carter as the personification of the "Great Satan" and were loath to boost his political fortunes.)

Mansour Farhang, Iran's former U.N. ambassador and a Bani-Sadr ally, says he is "also convinced" that Reagan and Khomeini made a bargain, though he can't prove it.

"There was a very dramatic and increadible change of mood among the Iranian clerics in October 1980 toward the negotiations to release the hostages," Farhang remembers. "I was completely dumbfounded, confused, incapable of making sense of it at the time... We who claimed Iran would get a better deal with Carter were dismissed; they said Iran would do better with Reagan."

Several sources, including Bani-Sadr, former Iranian intelligence officer Mansur Fafizadeh and two self-professed CIA contract employees, Richard Brenneke and Heinrich Rupp, claim that the fateful deal was sealed at a series of meetings in Paris on October 19 and 20, 1980, at the Hotels Raphael, Crillon and Florida.

Classifieds

Classified ads are ten cents a word. Count your own words and send check or money order to the Progressive Review, 1739 Conn Ave NW, DC 20009

TWIN OAKS, celebrating 20 years of living our values of equality, nonsexism and cooperation, seeks new members. For information about our rural intentional community write: Twin Oaks, Box PRW, Louisa Va. 13093

The attendees allegedly included Richard Allen, William Casey, Donald Gregg (a member of Carter's National Security Council who became Vice President Bush's top national security aide), several Iranian arms dealers and repreentatives of the leading Iranian clerics who would later oversee the Reagan arms-for-hostage deals of 1985-86. Rupp, a pilot, says he flew some of the American officials there. Brenneke says he attended one of the meetings.

One other American also participated, according to their accounts: George Bush.

Despite the plethora of claims, no hard evidence yet confirms these stories. Some of the alleged witnesses have dubious backgrounds or motives. Yet they cannot be dismissed.

The meetings would explain the sudden breakdown of the Carter negotiations in late October. They would explain why Barbara Honegger, then a Reagan-Bush campaign researcher, heard a fellow staffer exclaim, "We don't have to worry about an October surprise. Dick (Allen) cut a deal." They would help explain why the hostages were not released until January 20, 1981, the day of Reagan's inauguration as president. And they would explain why the Reagan administration allowed Israeli arms dealers and private brokers like Houshang Lavi to supply Iran with millions of dollars worth of U.S. military hardware in 1981 and 1982.

The reports of Paris meetings also square with the claim of a top PLO representative, Bassam Abu Sharif, who told Playboy magazine, "During the first campaign, the Reagan people contacted me... One of Reagan's closest freinds... on Reagan's campaign staff... We met in Beirut. He said he wanted the PLO to use its influence to delay the release of the American hostages from the embassy in Teheran until after the election."

President Carter himself confirmed, only this June, that "there were reports made to me before the election that this was going on. That the hostages would not be released and that weapons sales would be restored to Iran either directly or through the Israelis."

As Sen. Robert Byrd (D. -W. Va.) told his colleagues last year, "The secret policy of arming the ayatollah may even have begun early in the 1980s. This bribery and ransom strategy was on the minds of the inner circle of presidential advisers even before the [Reagan administration] took office... This opens up disturbing questions about the longevity of this ill-conceived arms-for-hostage strategy. It needs further investigation in my judgment." *-Copyright PNS*

Jonathan Marshall is co-author of The Iran-Contra Connection (South End Press, 1987), and editorial page editor of The Tribune (Oakland, Calif.) where a longer version of this article first appeared.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Calling the pot back

Dietrich Fischer

At the recent joint meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in West Berling, U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady, criticized the IMF for not doing more to collect its debts. The failure of poor countries to repay their debts, he said, poses a hurdle to any increase in IMF resources. He event went so far as to criticize Japan's generous offer to increase its lending to developing countries. A senior treasury department official said the United States wanted a reduction in the arrears of $3 billion that 13 poor nations owe the IMF.

This sounds like a cruel joke from an administration that has borrowed more than $500 billion abroad. When President Reagan took office, the United States was the world's biggest creditor. Other nations debt to us exceeded our foreign debt by $106 billion. Within a few years, we have become the biggest debtor nation. We now owe the rest of the world a net amount of $245 billion, more than all the traditionally most debt-ridden nations, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, the Philippines, Egypt and Poland, combined.

How did this happen? Through the "voodoo economics" that George Bush derided in 1980, but now embraces: a combination of high military spending and tax cuts for rich.

Annual military spending has increased from $144 billion in 1980 to $297 billion this year. Even taking inflation into account, this still represents a 50 percent real increase, unprecedented in peace time. If one includes interest payments on the portion of the national debt caused by past military spending, more than half of federal taxes are now being spent for military purposes. According to Jobs with Peace, of the $5767 that the average household paid in federal taxes in 1986, $3103 went for military spending, compared to only $138 for food and nutrition (while an estimated 20 million Americans suffer from some forms of malnutrition), $115 for housing (while thousands are homeless) and $126 for education (while many are functionally illiterate). The often heard assertion that the deficits are caused by excessive spending on social program is without foundation.

After assailing President Carter's deficits in his 1980 election campaign, President Reagan has accumulated far more national debt than all the Presidents before him, from George Washington to Jimmy Carter, combined.

This heavy borrowing has absorbed investment funds domestically and from all over the world, like a giant vacuum cleaner. Those resources have been badly needed for development projects in poor countries.

We all know that we cannot live on credit forever. If we borrow excessively, we face bankruptcy sooner or later. Where is the limit? Nobody knows for certain. Milton Eisenhower, the president's brother, once compared borrowing with taking sleeping pills. We can take one or two, perhaps even four without harm. But if we take twenty, we die. Not knowing exactly where the limit lies, it is safer to stay away from it.

Military spending not only diverts financial resources from the civilian economy, it focuses the best brains on devising more sophisticated methods to kill, instead of exploring how we can improve the living conditions of everyone. Japan, which spends only about 1 percent of its GNP for military purposes, compared to 6.8 percent for the United States, has enjoyed much more rapid economic growth. By improving the quality and reducing the costs of consumer products, it has been able to increase its exports substantially.

Administration officials have argued that military spending helps create jobs. Yet while each billion dollars spent by the Pentagon creates an estimated 28,000 jobs, the same billion spent for education could create 71,000 jobs. Each billion diverted from education to military purposes actually eliminates 43,000 potential jobs.

For years, the Reagan administration has absorbed investiment funds from all over the world to help finance its military buildup. It did so by committing future generations of Americans to repay these debts, without ever asking them.

Before lecturing poor countries about debt repayment, we would do well to set a good example by starting to repay some of our own foreign debts.

Dietrich Fisher, an Associte Profressor of Computer Science at Pace University and member of the Pace Peace Center, is author of Preventing War in the Nuclear Age *and co-author of* Winning Peace *(forthcoming in December).*

Were the votes counted right?

More than half the ballots cast on Election Day were highly vulnerable to fraud and error according to two reports recently released by the Urban Policy Research Institute and Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility.

These ballots were counted by computerized systems that, according to UPRI, can be affected by "various kinds of threats, error and manipulation." A single person can alter the outcome of any computerized election by tinkering

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the computers, vote-counting software or machine-readable ballots.

The UPRI report blames the vulnerability on inadequate procedural safeguards and on the vote-tallying systems themselves. The systems often prove to be too complex for local election officials to administer and can conceal evidence of tampering. In addition, they lack audit trails which would permit reconstruction of questionable election results.

There have been law suits in four states, each of which involving vote-counting systems from the same vendor, whose products dominate the market. IBM dropped out of the election computer market after a 1970 election in Los Angeles using punch-card ballots was challenged with allegations of fraud. Today, most election systems, according to the CPSR report, are purchased from small firms, some with just a few employees.

CPSR points out that "elections computer programs are not subject to design or source code inspections by independent auditors outside the vendor, as banking software is." Even if elections officials had access to the source codes, "few would be able to obtain the resources to determine its quality." In fact, CSPR report authors Bob Wilcox and Erik Nilsson suggest that the sloppy way in which some computer programs are created (and in some cases subsequently discarded) makes it difficult for even professionals "to determine if the program is designed correctly."

The problem is not theoretical. In 1980, a programming error during the president primary count led California election computers in one county to give 15,000 votes belonging to Jimmy Carter and Ted Kennedy to Lyndon Larouche and Jerry Brown.

In Gwinnet County, Georgia, the results of a close race were reversed after discovery of a computer hardware error.

In Moline, Illinois, a faulty timing belt slipped intermittently on one card reader, leading to a miscount in which a candidate actually took office and then had to give it up.

And a National Bureau of Standards report lists computer difficulties in 26 recent elections.

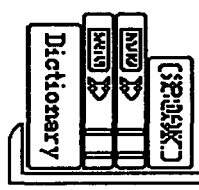
The possibilities for accidental or deliberate mischief are legion:

- Punch card ballots can be invalidated by adding an extra punch or two.
- Bogus ballots can be added or removed.
- Punched out dots can fall onto the next ballot in the stack, covering a hole and erasing a vote.
- Orientation marks on ballots, that tell the computer how to read the ballot, can be misprinted or mispunched.
- Supposedly secret passwords can be leaked, allowing unlawful entry to the system.
- "Trapdoors" can be surreptitiously opened within the system, causing miscounts and then closing themselves with no record that they ever existed.
- "Time bombs" allow a computer to act in a certain way at a certain time, say election day, again with no record, but in this case the practitioner doesn't even have to be present.
- "Trojan horses" do their mischief by hiding inside another program, perhaps one that prints up election results as bar charts. According to UPRI, "Once election officials open the gates by using the bar chart program, the Trojan horse can let out its software soldiers and manipulate the vote-counting procedure, first turning off the computer's record-keeping system or audit trail."

Two Princeton computer scientists reviewed the most common computer vote-tallying system and found the software so poorly designed that it was virtually impossible to guarantee its functions. Another computer scientist called the system "a bucket of worms" with over 4000 confusing, badly written instructions, all of which must work perfectly for the election results to be properly tallied and reported.

CPSR has come up with a program for improving election accuracy and security. Its recommendations include:

- independent review of software
- separation of functions and powers within the election system, so that, for example, ballot creation, elections, and election analysis would be done by different people with different software
- Making sure that citizens and not computer experts run elections.
- Checking ballots for validity before they leave a precinct.
- Reducing or eliminating human interaction with computers on election day.
- A complete record of all elections with an adequate audit trail.



For Your Information

ELECTION COMPUTERS

Urban Policy Research Institute
530 Paseo Miramar
Pacific Palisades CA
213-459-4982

Computer Professionals
for Social Responsibility
415-322-3778

MARION LOCKUP

National Moratorium on Prisons
78 Beacon St.
Boston MA

Committee to End the Marion Lockup
343 S. Dearborn
Chicago Ill

MEDIARCHY

FAIR
130 W 25th St 8th Flr
NYC NY

NUCLEAR POWER

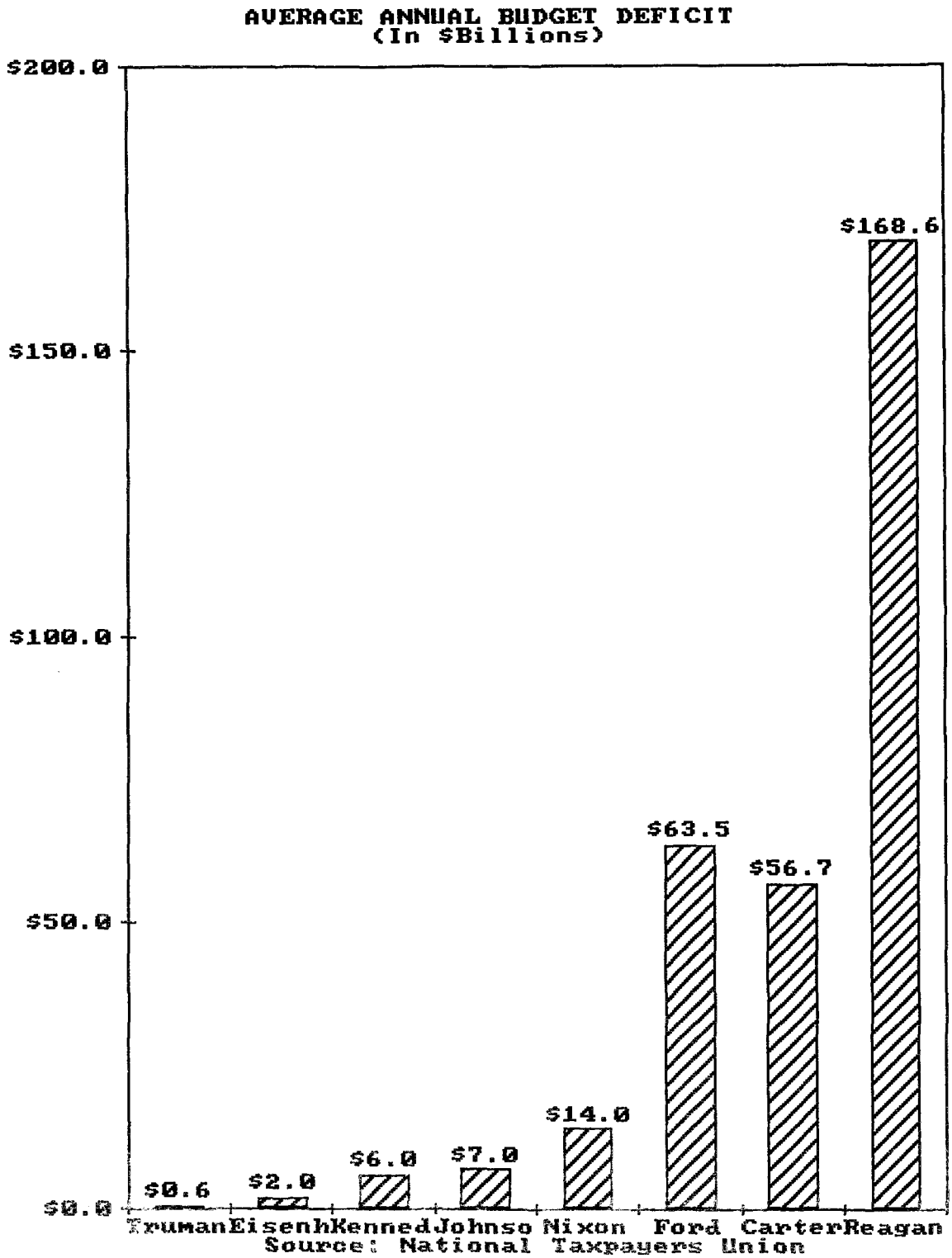
Public Citizen
PO Box 19404
DC

WHISTLEBLOWING

Government Accountability Project
25 E St NW #700
DC
202-347-0460

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who's a a big spender?



This chart shows the average annual budget deficits of American presidents since World War II. You will note that every Republican president has at least doubled the deficit of his predecessor. Among Democrats, Kennedy created major increases in the budget deficit, but LBJ – even with the Vietnam war, had only a slight increase and Jimmy Carter actually reduced the annual deficit.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marion lockup approaches fifth year

by John M. LaForge

"The Marion lockdown is now the longest in two centuries of U.S. prison history," Laurence Gonsales wrote of the U.S. Penitentiary at Marion, Illinois, in the February 1986 edition of *Chicago* magazine.

The lockdown or solitary confinement of nearly all Marion's inmates – begun after an assualt that resulted in the death of two guards on October 22, 1983 – is now in its 57th month. No end is in sight.

The prison population of 355 men, except for 40 "honor unit" prisoners, have been confined to their 8-by-8-by-6 foot cells for 23 hours of every day. One hour a day the men of this new Alcatraz are allowed into the short hallway to shave, shower and "recreate" – by means of walking or jogging along the corridor, always in handcuffs. As Michael Satchell wrote in *U.S. News and World Report*, "There is no communal dining, no prison industry, no large group recreation, no visiting entertainment, no random mingling with friends . . . no educational classes, no trustees, no contact visits with loved ones, no large group church services."

In a report made public in May 1987, the Nobel Prize-winning human rights organization Amnesty International condemned the lockdown conditions, calling them a violation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. Canadian lawyer David Matas wrote in the observer's report that ". . . certain conditions could, in their totality, amount to 'cruel, inhuman or degrading' treatment." It is the first condemnation of a U.S. prison by Amnesty International.

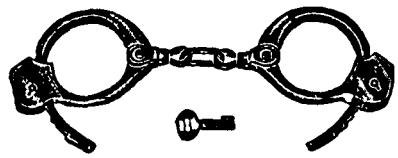
The U.S. Bureau of Prisons (BOP) calls the continued lockdown necessary in order to control "troublemakers" and the so-called "worst of the worst" convicts from other U.S. prisons. The official BOP line is: hurt someone at Leavenworth or Atlanta, and you're sent to Marion. But Jackie Lyden and Paula Schiller, in 1987 articles for *Chicago Lawyer* and *Illinois Times*, reported that prisoners and prison critics have shown transfers to Marion to be "exceedingly arbitrary," and that the isolation treatment is used against "not only genuinely dangerous men but also, and perhaps primarily, political prisoners, writ writers, prison religious leaders, and challengers of the status quo. . . ." A ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit found that some prisoners were sent to the original Control Unit inside Marion "for protesting prison conditions – leading work strikes, taking legal action, or arguing for religious freedom in prison."

Amnesty International found that "within Marion, violation of the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules is common . . . there is hardly a rule in the Standard Minimum Rules that is not infringed."

In February, 1987 a response to Amnesty International's report, then-BOP director Norman Carlson wrote, ". . . there are no reasons to initiate a new investigation into incidents which allegedly occurred three years ago."

Some Congressional eyebrows have been raised over the lockdown, but an investigation was called off, according to Lyden and Schiller, when the BOP complained.

For more information, write to the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown, 343 S. Dearborn, Chicago ILL 60604.



--Northern Sun News

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Baker's greenhouse

Peter Downs

George Bush's campaign manager, James A. Baker, epitomizes the Reagan-Bush administration's disregard for the environment consequences of government policy. Baker was one of the leading advocates of policies that damaged the atmosphere and wreaked havoc with American agriculture.

Much of the nation this summer suffered from drought this summer. The evidence mounts that the world has begun to experience warming due to the "greenhouse effect".

According to the National Weather Service, the five warmest years in the last century were in the 1980s. The southeastern United States have suffered through dry weather in four of the last five years, and parts, of the northern Great Plains are in a second straight year of drought.

James Hansen, a climatologist at the NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies told the Senate energy committee at the end of June that the earth already is experiencing "greenhouse" warming. The standard deviation in global temperatures from 1950 to 1980, he says, was 0.13 degrees celsius. The average global temperature in the first five months of this year was 0.4 degress celsius higher than the mean temperature for the 1950 to 1980 period, more than three times the standard deviation. That, Hansen claims, means that there is less than a one percent chance that natural climate fluctuations are causing the temperature rise.

Climatologist Syukoro Manabe of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is more cautious about blaming the greenhouse effect for the earth's warming. In testimony before the same Senate committee, however, he said that rising temperatures in the last century match the predictions of computer models of greenhouse warming. Those same models point to the interior regions of North America, southern Europe, and Siberia as areas that will become drier as temperatures increase. Thomas Wigley, of the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, agrees that the 1980s have confirmed several predictions of the greenhouse theory.

Scientists have issued warnings for years about the build-up of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere. Carbon dioxible insulates the Earth to reduce the amount of heat that radiates into space, much like the glass windows of a greenhouse. Increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere can increase the world's surface temperature and drastically change the global climate.

Several things contribute to the greenhouse effect, the most important are the burning of fossil fuels, the destruction of the world's forests, and the release of chloroflourocarbons into the atmosphere. The destruction of forests contributes to the greenhouse effect because trees consume carbon dioxide, counteracting processes which add carbon dioxide to the air.

Treasury Secretary James Baker led the Reagan administration's charge to make World Bank loans to debtor countries conditional on the governments of such countries adopting policies to increase agricultural exports, according to a 1986 study for the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress of the United States. A $350 million loan to Argentina in early 1986, for example, was linked to increasing grain exports from that country by 6.5 million metric tons.

A new study by the World Resources Institute indicates that much wooded land in recent years was cleared to promote just such export agriculture in Third World countries. The author of the report, economist Robert Repetto, estimates, for example that the leading cause of the destruction of the Amazoin in Brazil was the development of cattle ranches. He estimates tht such ranches accounted for at least 72% of Brazil's deforestation.

Such efforts to promote agroexport industries in Third World countries were, in part, natural responses to the burden of international debt.

Virtually all the economic experts who testified before the U.S Congress in 1983 and 1984 on the international debt crisis agreed that debtor nations had to increase exports. Robert Hormats, vice president of Goldman, Sachs, & Co., stated that "debt is deferred exports," and if a debtor country "cannot maintain an increase in the rate of growth of exports, it will be tragic," because "if a country does not take the necessary measures... it cannot get the financing it needs to get the imports it needs to run its economy... The banks are going to look at the performance of these countries in making future decisions about lending to them." Some of the experts pointed to the shambles of the Nicaraguan economy as an example of what happens when the banks decide to take a hard line and deny a country financing.

Paul Volcker, then chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, pointed out that 36 countries were under "stabilization programs" imposed by the International Monetary Fund. These programs, he said, were "the core" of the solution to the debt crisis, because they aimed to "reduce external financing requirements" by increasing exports, cutting imports and reducing state services.

Accordingly, many countries pursued programs aimed at making their forest land "productive" through logging and conversion to farmland, such as Brazil's cattle ranches.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet, the debt crisis had become so severe by the end of 1985, that in Latin America interest on the debts exceeded trade surpluses in every country except for Ecuador and Venezuela.

Baker, the Reagan-Bush administration and a Democratic Congress, sought to implement the financial community's nostrums, without stopping to consider the impact that massive deforestation would have on the world's climate.

The 1986 congressional study didn't examine the effect of the administration's debt crisis policy on the environment, but it did look at the policy's effect on the U.S. economy. The authors of the study concluded that the Baker policy directly hurt North American farmers. Between 1982 and 1985, for example, grain production in the U.S. remained steady. The increased grain in the world market, however, depressed crop prices, driving down the incomes and land values of North American farms. Now, farmers have to contend with drought.

Some Democrats, such as Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa and other members of the Populist Caucus, charged that the administration's policy amounted to sacrificing American farmers and workers to guarantee the profits of nine big banks, including Chase Manhattan, Citicorp. and Bank of America, which had outstanding loans to Latin America and Eastern Europe totalling almost 300% of their capital. Harkin's position received unintentional support from William Cline, of the Institute for International Economics, when he told Congress that "we have to realize we have vital financial interests that have to be played off against special interest groups' own concerns." One wonders if Cline would call the world's climate a "special interest" compared to the stability of certain North American banks.

An even more basic motivator for the Baker policy, however, may have been low levels of corporate profitability. Since its earliest days, one consistent theme of the Reagan-Bush administration has been the need to readjust government policies to bolster corporate profitability. The popular slogan expressing that theme was "get the government off the backs of business", and in practice it meant less regulation.

Economists such as Mary Malloy have pointed out that the average rate of profit of the U.S. economy declined particularly rapidly after 1965. In 1979-1980, companies reacted to lower profit rates by trying to reduce the price of labor through wage cuts, speed-ups, etc. Another way to bolster profits is to reduce the cost of raw materials, which means reducing the cost of the labor that extracts raw materials. The debt crisis created an opportunity to reduce raw material prices by increasing supplies and cutting the social services that supported wages.

The Reagan-Bush administration's preoccupation with helping corporate America maximise profits regardless of the environmental consequences also is evident in its positions on chloroflourocarbons and fossil fuels. The administration long delayed action on cutting emissions from fossil-fueled power plants, and its plan for CFC reduction is much weaker than that already announced by Dupont, the main U.S. manufacturer of CFCs.

Emissions from fossil-fueled power plants increase the acidity of rain, killing forests, marine life, and damaging crops. Carbon dioxide is the major factor in raising the acidity of lakes and oceans. CFCs not only contribute to global warming, but they destroy the ozone layer which filters ultraviolet light from the sun. Overexposure to ultraviolet light is the main cause of skin cancer.

Scientists have understood and publicized the dangers in processes that contribute to the global warming for years, nevertheless, the U.S. government and governments around the world put corporate profits ahead of a healthy environment and pursued policies that exacerbated the problem by destroying the world's forests and pumping more carbon dioxide and CFCs into the air. The United States already may have felt the effects of that decision, and it may feel it in more droughts for years to come.

Peter Downs is a freelance writer who works on the assembly line at the General Motors plant in Wentzville, Mo. He is recording secretary of UAW Local 2250.

The Progressive Review
1739 Connecticut Ave NW
Washington DC 20009-8922
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

To Subscribe:
( ) One year $10
( ) Two years $18
( ) Contribution enclosed $_____
Mail with check or money order to address above

Subscriber Newsletter

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED